SPH Mentor Program 2019-2020
A Guide for Mentors

The SPH Mentor Program connects students with alumni and other public health professionals to provide students with the opportunities to explore career possibilities, network and enhance their professional skills.

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Background Information

Our mentor program connects public health students to public health professionals to help with career and professional development. Mentoring relationships can benefit both mentors and mentees. For mentees, the program can have a key impact on future career choices. For mentors, helping the next generation of public health leaders can be rewarding and impactful. The program runs from October through April of each academic year.

The School of Public Health boasts the largest mentor program of any school of public health, serving approximately 400 students and mentors with special events and helpful resources for mentor pairs.

We work to provide students with diverse professional experiences and recognize the role that mentors have in training future public health leaders. Many of these relationships have proven to be enriching and longstanding.

In 2014, Minnesota Business Magazine awarded the School of Public Health Mentor Program with its Leaders in Health Care honor for Education and Workforce Development. In 2017, the SPH Mentor Program was named Program Extraordinaire by the University of Minnesota Alumni Association.

Commitment to Diversity

The SPH Mentor Program aims to create an inclusive climate that's open and welcoming to everyone. The program is committed to providing additional support and resources to mentees and mentors as needs emerge. For more information regarding this please see the resource section located on page 8 or contact Sara Pennebecker, Mentor Program Coordinator at phmentor@umn.edu or 612.626.7405.

Important Dates

Mentor Recruitment	August 12 – September 20
Matching Selection Period	September 23 – October 7
Match Notification	October 8
Kick-Off Breakfast	October 29
Mentor Forum	December
Mid-Year Check In with Program	January
Mentor Appreciation Dinner	April 2
Program Wraps Up	April 30

Matching Process

Most mentoring relationships will consist of one mentor and one mentee to allow for a close mentor-mentee relationship. However, some mentoring groups will have one mentor and two mentees. During the application process, students indicated a commitment to initiating, developing and maintaining a mentoring relationship. When making matches based on the available pool of mentors and mentees, the matching volunteers do their best to make appropriate matches based on interests, experiences and preferences selected on the applications. ***However, it is important to note that all individuals in the Mentor Program have a passion for public health and/or healthcare, and this alone is enough of a similar interest to build a mentoring relationship.***

What is Mentoring?

What Mentoring Is and Is Not

Mentoring IS:
- a commitment
- being open minded
- sharing experience
- improving communication skills
- increasing networking opportunities
- strengthening professional skills
- expanding one's worldview

Mentoring IS NOT:
- a guarantee of a job, internship or job recommendation for your mentee
- therapy
- supervision
- tutoring
- effortless

How can mentors support their mentees?

Mentors are expected to be able to:
- take time and provide attention;
- be a role model and an informal advisor;
- demonstrate commitment, competence and a willingness to extend knowledge and serve as a resource;
- offer suggestions and feedback, and communicate input respectfully;
- maintain open and honest lines of communication with the mentee;
- contact Mentor Program staff if there is a concern with the mentoring relationship.

Mentoring Dos and Don'ts

Do:
- Encourage your mentee to take initiative with the mentoring relationship.
- Be open to the mentee′s ideas and discussion topics.
- Be explicit about your own needs, limits and time constraints.
- Ask before making a suggestion or giving feedback.
- Be prepared to end the mentoring relationship at the end of the program, unless you both agree to continue another year.
- Keep the door open for your mentee in the future.

Don't:
- Assume your advice will be followed.
- Expect that the mentee will be enrolled in the major or program you graduated from.
- Expect that the mentee hopes to have the job or exact career path that you have or have taken.
- Assume your mentee does not need encouragement or reinforcement.
- Avoid discussion of touchy subjects.
- End the mentoring relationship prematurely.

Managing the Mentor Relationship

During your first meeting (at the welcome breakfast or during your first conversation), it is suggested that you clearly define the relationship to meet the needs of both your mentee and yourself. Use the Action Plan Template on page 7 as a mutual contract for managing the relationship. Taking the time to discuss and determine the following will help to ensure a successful mentoring relationship:

Time Commitment
For most mentor pairs, a successful relationship is built by meeting or conversing 1-2 hours per month. *However, the time commitment should be determined by the pair.*

Goals and Activities
Establish goals for the relationship and how you will achieve those goals. For example, if your mentee is local, a good activity for networking could be to invite your student to a meeting at your place of employment. If your mentee is long-distance, a practice interview could be done via Skype, Google Hangouts, FaceTime, or phone.

Mentors' Best Experiences with Mentees (ideas from previous mentors)
- Offering career advice, preparation and planning to mentees
- Offering academic planning advice and course feedback
- Discussing public health topics
- Attending professional development opportunities together whether in person or virtual
- Attending social events together

Distance Matches
- Pick your technology. Use video such as Google Hangouts or FaceTime if possible.
- Set times to connect (remember time zone difference if applicable).
- Collaborate on a project using internet collaboration tools such as Google Drive.
- Attend a webinar together offered by the SPH, UMAA or APHA.
- Connect mentee with colleagues to help them expand their network.

First Meeting: Getting acquainted

- Use the action plan on page 7 to develop goals and set expectations for the mentoring relationship together. This includes how often you will meet, what you each hope to get out the relationship, and how to contact each other.
- Establish a schedule for future meetings and discuss preferences for communication in-between such as phone, email, Skype
- Share your story and background
- Discover common interests
- Learn about student's career goals and interests

Conversation Topics

- Talk about the student's skills and talents and how these can be applied in the industry
- Explore the needs and current trends of the industry and discuss qualifications for different types of positions in the field
- Talk about how your values have impacted your academic and career choices
- Discuss work/life balance
- Talk about the training and skill development that would be helpful
- Explore professional associations and relevant organizations
- Discuss employers and work environments
- Talk about the transition from school to work
- Discuss professional standards and workplace etiquette

Networking Opportunities

- Attend a conference or professional association meeting together (such as the MPHA Policy Forum series)
- Help arrange meetings/coffee/lunch with your colleagues, either informally or as informational interviews
- Attend a lecture or event on-campus such as Research Day or the Gaylord Anderson Lecture
- Connect mentee with colleagues to expand their network

Professional Skill-Building

- Conduct an informational interview and/or a practice interview
- Provide feedback on resume or cover letters
- Practice proper professional etiquette for an interview, business lunch, or networking opportunity
- Participate in a webinar such as through SPH Alumni Society (sphalumni.umn.edu), UMAA (umnalumni.org/UMAA-learn-grow), or APHA (apha.org/events-and-meetings/webinars)
- Search the internet together for job resources and other information related to your field
- Review a class project or assignment and talk about applying the content or skills to the workplace
- Help mentee practice for a class presentation
- Read a book or article and discuss together
- Check out SPH Career & Professional Development Center website (http://www.sph.umn.edu/current/careers/students/)

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I get a mentor/student?

- All mentors and mentees (even those who participated last year) must apply by the application deadline to be considered for participation in the program this year. The program is open only to participants who sign up by the deadline.

What is the time commitment?

- The time commitment is determined by the mentor and student during initial meetings. Most mentor pairs choose to communicate approximately 1-3 hours per month, using the communications tools that work best for them or by meeting in person. The program officially runs from October through April.

What is expected of mentor pairs?

- Mentors and students who apply should be committed to engaging with their match and developing a professional mentor/mentee relationship. This includes communicating on a monthly basis. The mentor program is NOT a job placement program for students. There are no expectations that a job or internship will develop out of this experience.

Can I participate as a mentor or mentee if I don't live locally?

- Yes. Many of our mentees and mentors do not live locally in the Twin Cities. Mentors who live outside of the state of Minnesota, or even outside of the United States, are encouraged to apply.

I haven't heard from my mentee. What should I do?

- Mentees are strongly encouraged to initiate the relationship with their mentor. It is up to the mentor if they would like to reach out to initiate the relationship. If you have tried to connect with your mentee and they haven't responded, please reach out to us at phmentor@umn.edu.

I just received my mentee/mentor information. I don't think I have anything in common with them. What do I do?

- When making matches based on the available pool of mentors and mentees, the matching volunteers do their best to make appropriate matches based on interests, experiences and preferences selected on the applications. However, it is important to note that all individuals in the Mentor Program have a passion for public health and/or healthcare, and this alone is enough of a similar interest to build a mentoring relationship. We encourage matches to go in with an open mind and see what you might have in common.

I'm having problem with my mentor/mentee. What should I do?

- If you're unable or uncomfortable having a conversation with your mentee/mentor about the situation, please reach out at phmentor@umn.edu or 612.626.7405 to discuss the situation.

Contact Information For Mentee/Mentor:

Name: _____ Email: _____ Phone: _____

Time commitment of the mentoring relationship (ex: meet once/month for one hour):

_____

Communication preferences (email, cell phone, work phone, etc):

_____

What are the student's goals this year?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What resources can the mentor provide to assist in reaching these goals?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Plan your next two meetings:

1. Date/Time: _____

    Location: _____

2. Date/Time: _____

    Location: _____

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Contact Information & Resources

Mentor Program Staff

- Sara Pennebecker
  Assistant Director of Alumni Relations,
  Mentor Program Coordinator
  612.626.7405
  phmentor@umn.edu

- Heidi Mastrud
  Director of Alumni Relations
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Mentor Program website

- www.sph.umn.edu/current/mentor/

Career & Professional Development Center

- www.sph.umn.edu/current/careers/students/

Student Resources (including major guidebooks and University resources)

- www.sph.umn.edu/current/resources/

Gold Mind (a collection of University faculty and expert talks)

- umnalumni.org/Goldmind

Health Equity Work Group

- www.sph.umn.edu/research/hewg/

Graduate School Diversity Office

- www.grad.umn.edu/diversity

Office for Equity and Diversity

- diversity.umn.edu/